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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019

Implementation of projects financed from the Development Account: tenth progress report

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Development Account is a capacity development programme of the United Nations Secretariat aimed at enhancing capacities of developing countries in the priority areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/237, in which the Assembly decided to keep the implementation of the Development Account under review. It provides information on the implementation of projects funded from the Account since the submission of the ninth progress report (A/70/97) as well as updates on the management of the Account.

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I. Introduction

1. The purpose of the present report is to update Member States on the performance and management of the Development Account since the issuance of the ninth progress report (A/70/97). The mandate of the report is contained in General Assembly resolution 56/237, in which the Assembly reiterated its decision to continue to keep the implementation of the Account under review. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions[1] subsequently recommended that the report be submitted in the context of the presentation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium concerned. All previous progress reports, as well as details on individual projects, are available from the Development Account website (www.un.org/development/desa/da).

2. The Development Account was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/12 B as a mechanism to fund capacity development projects of the economic and social entities of the United Nations Secretariat: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

3. Since the launch of the Development Account in 1997, 358 projects have been approved, of which 102 projects are currently ongoing (ninth and tenth tranches). In addition, 46 new projects under the eleventh tranche are being presented to the General Assembly for its consideration as part of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 (A/72/6 (Sect. 35)).

II. The policy context in which the Development Account operates

4. Following the global review and consultations on the progress towards achieving the aspirations of the Millennium Declaration, including the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, the Millennium Development Goals were brought to a close in 2015. Building on the successes and lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business, the international community adopted the much more ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) with its comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

5. The new Agenda and its Goals and targets encompass a much broader and interconnected spectrum of issues across the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) aimed at achieving a prosperous, peaceful, sustainable and equitable world. "Leave no one behind" is the central promise of this new vision, which pledges to address the multidimensional causes of poverty, inequality and discrimination and reduce the vulnerability of the most marginalized. Implementing this new vision calls for the adoption of new, more integrated, strategic and collaborative approaches by both Member States and the development community to address the complex and interrelated challenges of

[1] See A/57/7/Add.5 and A/58/7/Add.1-30.

sustainable development. This, in turn, requires increased capacities to formulate and implement such approaches.

6. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has identified capacity development as a key element for the implementation of sustainable development and has stressed the importance of United Nations system support in that regard. In the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operation activities for development of the United Nations system (General Assembly resolution 71/243), the importance of capacity development to achieve internationally agreed development goals was further reiterated and the United Nations system was called upon to support national efforts in that connection. In particular, the United Nations development system was requested to provide upstream, evidence-based policy and institutional support. The Development Account and its 10 implementing entities are uniquely positioned to do so, placed at the intersection of the global policy framework and implementation at the national level.

7. The reporting period also saw the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (General Assembly resolution 69/313), which further reaffirmed the commitment to capacity development and the means of implementation to address the challenge of financing sustainable development, and the adoption of the Paris Agreement on the global response to the threat of climate change.

III. Overview and achievements

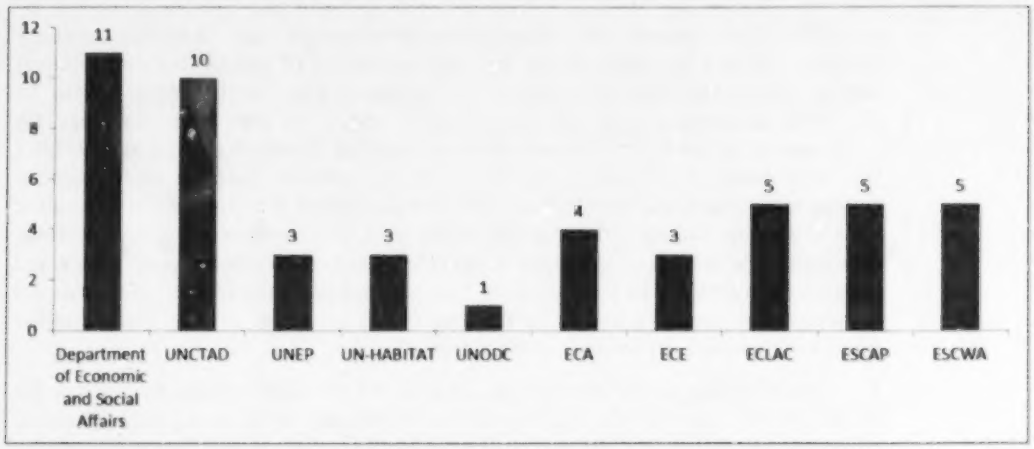
8. The eighth tranche of the Development Account was brought to a successful close during the period covered by the present report. It comprised a total of 50 active projects.[2] Thirty-nine of the projects were funded from the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013 (General Assembly resolution 66/248 A) and 11 were funded from additional funds appropriated through Assembly resolution 66/246.

9. The tranche was launched in the wake of the 2010 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals under the general theme "Supporting Member States to accelerate progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in the context of the multiple and interrelated development challenges".

10. The eighth tranche projects sought to make available the full range of normative and analytical expertise and the comparative advantages of the implementing entities to beneficiary countries. Through funding from the Account, the mostly non-resident implementing entities were able to operationalize their vast knowledge and know-how and deliver capacity development assistance on the ground. The eighth tranche projects were developed in direct response to requests from beneficiary countries. As illustrated in figure I, the eighth tranche featured projects delivered by all 10 Development Account implementing entities. A total of 28 projects were implemented by the five global entities of the Account and the remaining 22 projects were executed by the five United Nations regional commissions.

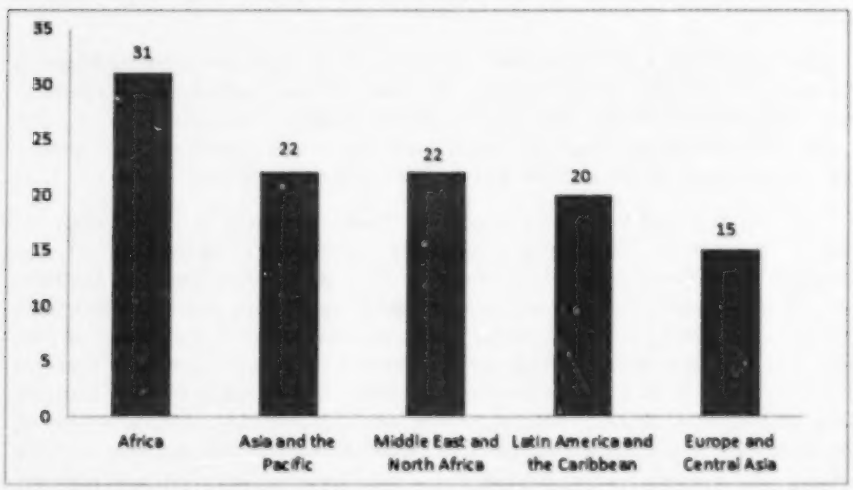
[2] At the time of writing, final and evaluation reports were available for 42 projects. Together with the project documents and project progress reports for the eighth tranche projects, they provided the main source of information for the analysis of the eighth tranche in the present report.

Figure I
Eighth tranche projects, by implementing entity



11. The eighth tranche projects supported capacity development in all the major developing regions of the globe (see figure II). In terms of the number of projects, Africa was the region that received the most prominent support from the eighth tranche, with close to a third of all projects including at least one country in Africa among its beneficiaries. Approximately two fifths of the projects included at least one beneficiary country from Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean regions, and a third of the projects included at least one beneficiary country from Europe and Central Asia.

Figure II
Regional distribution of eighth tranche projects*



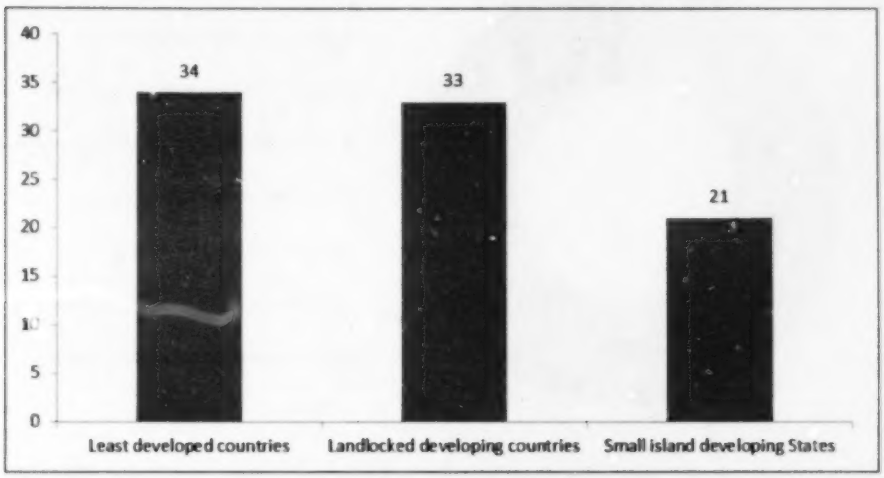
* Several projects simultaneously support countries in different regions of the world. The sum of the figures in the above graph therefore exceeds the total number of eighth tranche projects.

12. The implementation of the eighth tranche projects contributed to capacity development in as many as 132 developing countries and 17 countries with economies in transition across different parts of the world. This includes both

countries that were direct targets of the projects and beneficiary countries that benefited from the outputs or deliverables emanating from the projects.

13. While the eighth tranche projects focused on providing capacity development support to developing countries in general, particular attention and efforts were paid to countries with special needs, namely, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. As highlighted in figure III, approximately two thirds of the projects provided capacity development support to least developed countries and landlocked developing countries and two fifths of the projects provided the same support to small island developing States.

Figure III
Eighth tranche projects focusing on countries with special needs*



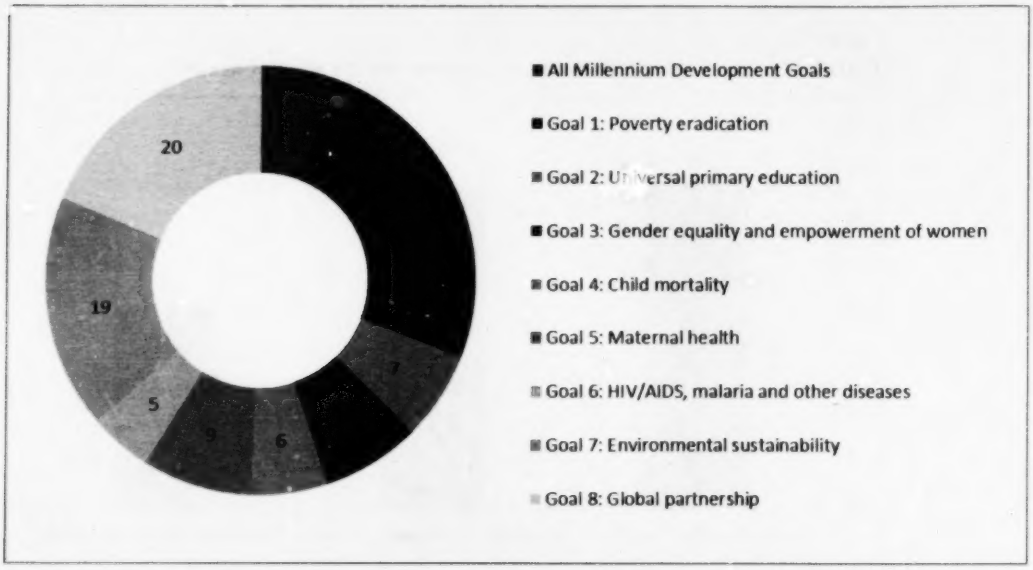
* Many projects simultaneously support countries in several different categories. The sum of the figures provided, therefore, exceeds the total number of eighth tranche projects.

Box 1
Least developed countries and small island developing States

The programming of the eighth tranche of the Development Account followed the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, at which the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) was adopted. Four of the eighth tranche projects focused solely on least developed countries, with an additional 30 projects including at least one least developed country among its beneficiaries. These projects contributed to the overarching goal of the Programme of Action to overcome the structural challenges faced by least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category. The eighth tranche also included 33 countries in the landlocked developing country category among its beneficiaries, with each landlocked developing country benefiting from an average of six projects. Twenty-one of the eighth tranche projects also included at least one small island developing State among its beneficiaries, with one eighth tranche project focusing exclusively on small island developing States and increasing their resilience against climate change (the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) project "Capacity development to increase the resilience of Asian and Pacific cities to climate change (1213AU)"). These projects supported the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (General Assembly resolution 69/15).

14. In line with the general theme of the tranche, all eighth tranche projects contributed towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As illustrated in figure IV, Goal 1 (eradicate extreme hunger and poverty), Goal 8 (develop a global partnership for development) and Goal 7 (ensure environmental sustainability) were the three most frequently supported Goals. All the Goals, covering all three pillars of sustainable development, were, however, supported through the delivery of the projects, as illustrated in figure IV.

Figure IV
Number of eighth tranche projects supporting the different Millennium Development Goals*



* Several projects simultaneously support more than one Millennium Development Goal. The sum of the figures in the above graph therefore exceeds the total number of eighth tranche projects.

15. The eighth tranche projects provided capacity development assistance to project beneficiary countries through various means. Project deliverables included some 270 national workshops and more than 150 subregional/regional/interregional workshops. Deliverables also included study tours to promote North-South and South-South cooperation during the course of the implementation of three projects.

16. In addition, the implementation of the eighth tranche projects led to the development of various analytical products that were utilized in the projects during implementation or delivered as end products to the project beneficiaries: (a) 120 country/case/subregional/global studies; (b) 23 briefs; (c) 19 reports; and (d) 6 publications.

17. Thirty projects included the development of tools, toolkits, methodologies, models, guides, manuals and innovative practices among their outputs. Fourteen projects produced a total of 44 training courses or modules for the benefit of Member States. Platforms, networks and committees at various levels were also developed and utilized under 23 projects.

18. Twenty-two projects provided assistance to Member States in their policymaking efforts at different levels, ranging from supporting the drafting of strategies to the implementation of laws. This included: (a) 79 national action plans; (b) 29 policy recommendations/notes; (c) 14 policy proposals; (d) 14 policy actions; and (e) 4 policy documents.

19. The full range of the results achieved through projects are often not immediately apparent, however, at the close of their implementation. The extent of the impact may only become evident some time thereafter. In the description of Development Account project achievements in different areas under the three pillars of sustainable development set out below, the scope of reporting has therefore been extended beyond the eighth tranche to cover a broader range of projects from previous tranches.

Economic pillar

20. In the past 10 years, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has transferred, through several Development Account-supported projects, economy-wide and energy modelling tools and the required capacity to use them for policy analysis to 22 countries in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Africa. The projects have influenced the way governments think about the feasibility of different policies using evidence from rigorous modelling analyses that integrate the economic and social dimensions of development and energy planning. The use of the models by government experts has helped to sharpen thinking on development policies and encouraged policy dialogue. There is now more awareness about the fact that any development policy needs to be assessed in the light of the real macroeconomic and financing feasibility of implementing the policy. Economy-wide models inform the design and the implementation of national development plans, including in energy planning, given that they help to detect the trade-offs and synergies of policies flowing through all sectors of a socioeconomic system.

21. The availability and utilization of quality statistical information are key for evidence-based policy formulation and tracking progress towards the achievement of national and international development targets. With the support of the Development Account, ECA has helped to strengthen the capacity of Member States to collect and produce high-quality data on civil registration and vital statistics in the Africa region. Activities implemented in Africa have fed into the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and have helped to harness political commitment for improvement of the systems at the highest level of governments through the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Civil Registration, promoted country ownership and leadership as well as systematic and coordinated approaches at the regional and country levels, built the capacity of civil registration and vital statistics officials and facilitated the sharing of knowledge and experiences among countries. ECA has, with the support of the Development Account, also helped to strengthen the capacity of African countries to use mobile technology to collect data for effective policymaking and decision-making. The beneficiary countries have developed in-house capacity and gained skills to use mobile technology in data collection.

22. Through Development Account projects, UNCTAD has helped to strengthen science, technology and innovation policies in Africa, Latin America and Asia and supported the capacities of developing countries to design, implement and evaluate their science, technology and innovation policies. Through the projects, UNCTAD has increased the level of awareness and understanding among policymakers, academics and businesses about innovation policy; provided independent and sound advice on how to integrate national science, technology and innovation policies into national development strategies; identified priorities for strengthening national science, technology and innovation capacities; and strengthened the capacities of public officials and other key stakeholders from 18 countries to design, implement and evaluate science, technology and innovation policies. Policymakers from other non-project developing countries have also benefited from the policy analysis and recommendations.

23. UNCTAD has also supported strengthening the capacity of developing country academics to conduct policy-oriented teaching and research on trade and development issues through Development Account projects in support of its Virtual Institute. The projects have helped to consolidate the role of academic institutions in fostering evidence-based policymaking in developing and transition countries. They have also resulted in an increase in the quantity and the enhancement of the quality of postgraduate teaching and relevant research at participating universities. Drawing on the Virtual Institute's online competencies and university contacts, the projects have provided sophisticated postgraduate economics training and high-level original research, which have resulted in the strengthening of the capacities of developing and transition country researchers to undertake policy-relevant research on the impact of trade on poverty in their countries. The projects have also contributed to increased researcher-policymaker cooperation and ensured that the research outputs completed are policy-relevant for the participating countries. With the support of the Account, the number of academic institutions that are members of the Virtual Institute has grown to 131 institutions from 64 countries around the world. Some 1,350 staff from beneficiary universities use the Virtual Institute website to access teaching resources and for knowledge-sharing. The teaching materials produced have been used in the preparation of courses or as background reading in teaching nearly 15,500 students. More than 100 researchers around the world have acquired new skills on trade and poverty research methods through an online course, and 11 policy-relevant trade and poverty studies have been completed by participating researchers in cooperation with national policymakers from the African, Asian and European regions.

24. Cumbersome trade procedures discourage economic activity and make it difficult for the private sector and countries to participate in regional and global production networks. With the support of the Development Account, ESCAP has assisted countries in the region with enhancing their capacity to develop and implement cross-border paperless trade facilitation measures that help to simplify processes and regulations, reduce trade costs and boost trade in the Asia-Pacific region.

25. Similarly, ECE has supported the capacity of transition and developing economies to implement international standards for commercial agricultural products to improve their trade competitiveness and has organized capacity-building activities in Central Asian countries to increase their opportunities in international trade. These activities have made it possible to work towards the pooling of production resources and increase business and export potential, as well as open new markets and provide prospects for the sustainable economic and social development of the region.

26. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has worked on strengthening the capacity of national tax administrations in Latin America to reduce tax transaction costs and maximize tax revenue through rationalizing the management and simplifying the operation of tax systems. With the assistance of the Development Account, a methodology to measure tax transaction costs has been developed to allow for an assessment of different cost areas, in order to identify measures to reduce such costs and, as a result, increase tax revenue available to governments for investment in sustainable development. In addition to pilot countries, several other countries in Latin America have committed to assessing tax transaction costs by using the methodology developed, with a view to identifying effective measures to reduce such costs.

Social pillar

27. UNODC has promoted the rule of law and governance in the criminal justice system in Africa. UNODC assistance has helped to improve the availability and quality of justice for the accused by supporting the building of legal aid capacity and infrastructure and enhancing coordination and synergy among key actors that support and oversee the courts. Through those efforts, UNODC has improved the quality of legal representation and enhanced compliance with the right to a fair trial. Building on those successes, UNODC has proposed a new project, under the eleventh tranche of the Development Account, on improving access to legal aid for women in Western and Central Africa.

Box 2
Gender-responsive capacity development

The capacity development focus of Development Account projects spans a wide array of areas covering economic and social affairs, trade, sustainable development, human settlements, and drugs and crime. An important cross-cutting concern is how men and women are affected differently by the issues that the projects address. The consideration of differentiated needs and addressing identified gender inequalities are an important dimension of the Development Account. Four eighth tranche projects in particular focused on this issue: (a) UN-Habitat: Strengthening the capacities of the member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to address the land and property issues of internally displaced persons and refugees, with a specific emphasis on women's land and property rights (*1213T*); (b) ESCAP: Interregional cooperation to strengthen national capacities to measure progress in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment (*1213AI*); (c) ESCWA: Institutional and capacity-building project for Arab parliaments and other stakeholders for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security (*1213AK*); and (d) ECA: Capacity-building on agribusiness for women to enhance food security in Eastern Africa (*1213AV*).

Environmental pillar

28. The implementing entities of the Development Account have also supported capacity development in various areas under the environmental pillar of sustainable development. UNEP has, for example, implemented capacity-building projects on resource management and ecosystems-based adaptation in several African countries. Through those projects, environmental issues have been integrated into economic and agricultural policies and plans. The impact and sustainability of the projects, however, go well beyond national legislation and policies that have enhanced food security and water supply. They have also addressed income security and disaster risk reduction and facilitated innovative partnerships across sectors.

29. The science and policy interface to manage complex disaster risks is key for the inclusion of resilience in the sustainable development agenda. Supported by the Development Account, ESCAP has developed risk assessment tools and guidelines to systematically assess how complex global climate phenomena can affect vulnerable communities and to quantify impacts of climate phenomena on sustainable development in the region. Utilizing these risk assessment tools and guidelines as a part of regional and national strategies to build resilience and mitigate future impacts in the Asia-Pacific contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

30. With support from the Development Account, UN-Habitat has further kick-started an urban climate change resilience programme focusing on the capacity development of local authorities and other key urban stakeholders in the Pacific. The capacity development assistance provided to one government has resulted in the development of an urban resilience and climate action plan. Based on the plan, a pilot initiative that supports two informal settlement communities in developing resilient water and sanitation facilities as prioritized by the communities is now being funded by a donor government.

31. ECE has promoted the importance of sustainable forest management as a tool to strengthen low-carbon, resource-efficient and socially inclusive green economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia. ECE is continuing those efforts through an ongoing project aimed at strengthening the national capacity of countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to develop accountability systems for sustainable forest management. The efforts of ECE have led to positive changes in the development of sustainable forest management policies aligned with green economy principles, including the development and adoption of national action plans for the forest sector and the development of a reform concept of the forest management system in accordance with a green economy.

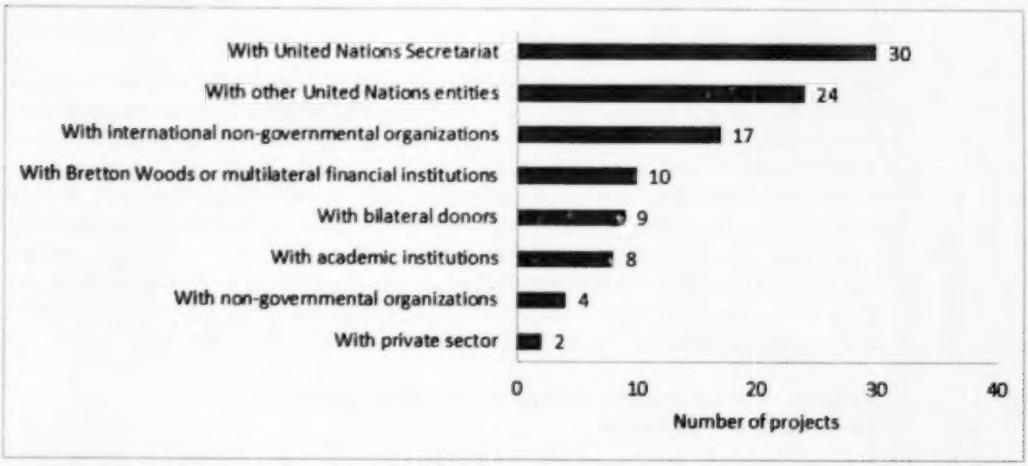
32. ECLAC has sought to improve the national capacities of Latin American and Caribbean export sectors to meet the challenges and exploit new opportunities arising from the increasing spread of climate change regulations in international trade and to exploit those opportunities to enhance the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises in international markets. The efforts by ECLAC have succeeded in filling persistent information gaps in the participating countries, in particular among agricultural producers and exporters directly affected by carbon footprint initiatives in their destination markets. Trade sustainability criteria and export-product carbon footprint calculation and mitigation have, for the first time, been introduced in several of the participating countries. Some 22,000 producers have indirectly benefited from such activities. The direct involvement with multiple stakeholders, together with an effective approach at the enterprise level and emphasis on the development of public-private partnerships, has inspired several recent initiatives across Latin America.

33. ECLAC has also provided assistance in strengthening national capacities to design and implement sustainable energy policies for the production and use of biofuels and to address the issue of weak institutional and technical capacity of governments in the Latin America and the Caribbean region to deploy and implement effective evidence-based energy efficiency policies and programmes at the national level, with particular attention to policies on innovation. Specifically, those efforts have contributed to creating an enabling environment for sustainable energy policies at the national and regional levels. They have helped to improve national capacities to compile disaggregated demographic, economic, activity-level and energy consumption data in order to calculate energy efficiency indicators at the sectoral levels; increased knowledge regarding the link between economic activity and energy consumption; and enhanced the capacity of governments to promote policymaking based on data and indicators. In addition, they have further raised awareness of the need for a multisectoral approach to energy planning and introduced the Long-range Energy Alternatives Planning System (LEAP) model as a tool for cross-sectoral policy debate. Such initiatives have supported the ability of Latin American and Caribbean countries to establish sustainable energy policies, legislation or planning outcomes for the production and use of biofuels.

Partnerships, leveraging and multiplier effects

34. A key component of the Development Account implementation strategy is encouraging implementing entities to build and deliver projects in partnerships with entities from both within and beyond the United Nations system. Successful partnerships allow projects to draw on the knowledge and know-how available in the collaborating entities and avail project beneficiary countries of the expertise available in those entities. Partnerships have the potential to enhance the sustainability and potential impact of projects by facilitating the continuation of cooperation between project-collaborating entities and counterparts in the beneficiary countries beyond the time frame of the project. Almost all eighth tranche projects were implemented as collaborative efforts with key partners, with both organizations from within and outside the United Nations system providing important contributions (see figure V).

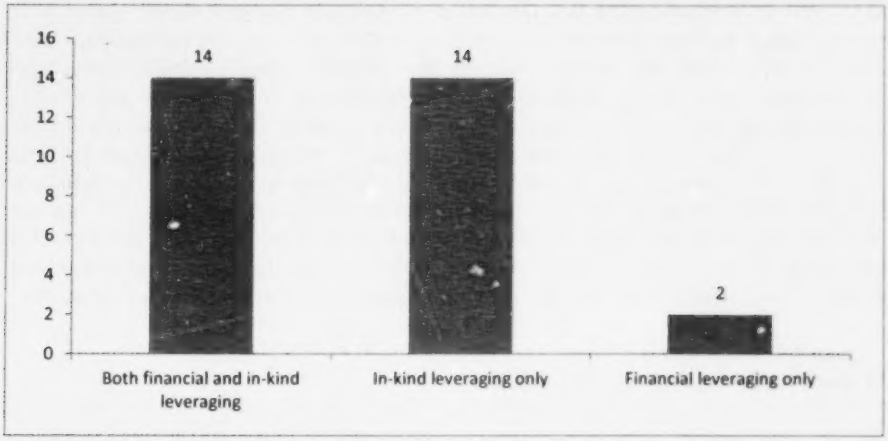
Figure V
Eighth tranche project partnerships*



* Several projects engaged in partnerships with more than one category of partners. The sum of the figures in the above graph therefore exceeds the total number of eighth tranche projects.

35. Almost two thirds of eighth tranche projects received additional resources from external sources. A third of the projects received in-kind support such as logistical support, travel and accommodation arrangements for workshop participants, provision of speakers and experts to support the delivery of workshops, and workshop venues. A tenth of the projects were further supported financially, through external resources. A third of the projects benefited from both financial and in-kind external support.

Figure VI
Eighth tranche project leveraging



36. The reach of several eighth tranche projects was extended beyond their original design through various multiplier effects. At least 52 additional countries other than the initially selected target countries benefited from seven projects. Thirteen projects further resulted in requests for additional technical and advisory assistance, studies and training from project beneficiary and non-beneficiary countries. Eleven projects generated follow-up activities by the beneficiary countries themselves after their close. Thirty-eight new follow-up projects to continue or expand on the activities of nine projects implemented under the eighth tranche are, furthermore, in the pipeline or have already been launched. Three non-project governments have committed to replicating the delivery of three projects in their countries.

Building on achievements to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

37. Building on the experience and the achievements of past tranches, the projects proposed for the eleventh tranche of the Account have been developed under the general theme "Supporting Member States in strengthening evidence-based policy coherence, integration and participatory implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels". The Account and its implementing entities are well positioned and stand ready to continue to actively support Member States in areas of their priority needs through the delivery of the projects proposed for the eleventh tranche and to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the central promise of the 2030 Agenda of providing inclusive development for all and leaving no one behind. All eleventh tranche projects have clear links to achieving specific Sustainable Development Goal targets.[3]

[3] See also the 46 new eleventh tranche projects being presented to the General Assembly for its consideration as part of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 (A/72/6 (Sect. 35)).

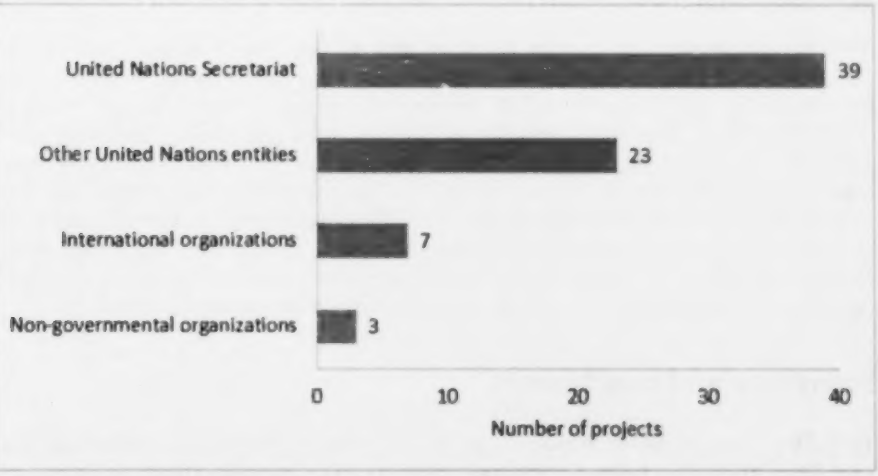
Box 3
No one left behind

While leaving no one behind is at the forefront of the 2030 Agenda, the Development Account has a history of supporting those left the furthest behind. Nine eighth tranche projects addressed the needs and rights of at least one vulnerable group. Among the key beneficiaries were children, young people, persons with disabilities, older people, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants and the poor. Two eighth tranche projects focused specifically on inclusion and the rights of vulnerable groups. The ECLAC project "Time for equality: Strengthening the institutional framework of social policies (1213AE)", which was implemented in collaboration with ESCAP and ESCWA, promoted social protection policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, and Western Asia. The UN-Habitat project "Strengthening the capacities of the member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to address the land and property issues of internally displaced persons and refugees, with a specific emphasis on women's land and property rights (1213T)" further considered the rights of the refugees and internally displaced people with a focus on women and young people.

IV. Managing the Development Account for results

38. The 2030 Agenda places a strong emphasis on partnerships and collaboration. With the eleventh tranche, the Development Account reached a milestone, with 96 per cent of the proposed projects foreseen to be implemented in partnerships with other entities from the United Nations system. This exceeds the percentage in previous tranches. Many of the eleventh tranche projects will be implemented jointly among several entities, including projects on illicit financial flows, migration, geospatial data, graduation and environment.

Figure VII
Eleventh tranche project partnerships*



* Several projects engaged in partnerships with more than one category of partners. The sum of the figures in the above graph therefore exceeds the total number of eleventh tranche projects.

39. A prime example of Development Account partnerships is the $10 million programme for statistics and data to enhance the statistical capacities of Member States, which is being jointly implemented, in true "Delivering as one" fashion, by all 10 implementing entities of the Account under its tenth tranche.

40. An important achievement during the reporting period was the streamlining of procedures for quality assurance and design of Development Account projects. The time period between General Assembly approval of the resources for the Development Account for the biennium and the start of project implementation has been reduced significantly over the past two tranches. With the eleventh tranche, the Development Account team intends to work on further reducing this time period, with the aim of having project documents finalized before the end of 2017 and most projects allotted by early 2018.

41. During the 2018-2019 biennium, the Development Account team will continue to review and provide oversight to 148 projects as follows: (a) 46 projects of the eleventh tranche will be programmed, requiring a review of project documents and issuance of allotments; (b) the twelfth tranche will be launched, requiring the review of 45 to 50 project concept notes, in addition to the preparation of the budget fascicle; (c) 59 ninth tranche and 43 tenth tranche projects will need to be actively monitored, requiring regular consultation with the implementing entities and the review of the year end progress reports; and (d) final reports and evaluation reports for 59 ninth tranche projects will need to be reviewed and assessed to take stock of project achievements and challenges and to prepare the eleventh progress report to the General Assembly.

42. A new public website for the Development Account (www.un.org/development/desa/da/) was launched during the reporting period to increase transparency and the sharing of information with implementing partners and Member States. The website features up-to-date information and includes dynamic pages allowing for easier browsing of all projects by different criteria.

43. Building on an updated project document database that was developed during the reporting period, the Development Account team is launching a knowledge management platform that will allow all implementing entities to have access to relevant project documents from current and past tranches and to share knowledge and lessons learned.

44. Project evaluations are an essential part of the programming cycle of the Development Account. Lessons learned distilled from the evaluations are used in the design of new projects and to prepare the progress report to the General Assembly. Since the fourth tranche of the Account, mandatory end-of-project external evaluations are required, with 2 per cent of the total project envelope allocated for that purpose. To date, a total of 170 projects have been evaluated. The Development Account team will engage with the Development Account Network to review the evaluation process and ensure that these funds are used in the most efficient and effective way and that more programme-level results can be distilled, reported on and disseminated through the knowledge management network.

V. Summary and conclusions

45. **The Development Account is an important funding mechanism for enabling the 10 United Nations Secretariat implementing entities to operationalize their normative and analytical expertise and deliver demand-driven projects to assist developing countries in achieving the 2030 Agenda for**

Sustainable Development. The projects are implemented in collaboration with relevant partners both within and beyond the United Nations system.

46. The reporting period saw the launch of the tenth tranche of the Account and the programming of projects financed from the residual balances of the seventh tranche. The reporting period also saw the eighth tranche of the Account being successfully brought to a close.

47. An important next step will be to ensure that the project documents of the eleventh tranche are prepared and reviewed in a timely manner and that the allotments are issued during the first quarter of 2018. All eleventh tranche projects have clear links to specific Sustainable Development Goal targets.

48. The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.

Annex I

Summary of Development Account tranches as at 31 May 2017

Biennium	*Theme*	*Tranche*	*Approved (thousands of United dollars)*	*General Assembly resolution*	*Total number of projects*	*Number of active projects*	*Implementation period*	*Status as at 31 May 2017 (percentage)*
1998-1999	Support for the implementation of global conferences	1	13 065.00	53/220 A	7	–	–	Closed
2000-2001	Networking and regional and subregional expertise	2	13 065.00	54/249	16	–	–	Closed
2002-2003	Capacity-building for managing globalization	3	13 065.00	56/254 A	20	–	–	Closed
2004-2005	Capacity-building for Millennium Development Goals through partnerships, knowledge-management and taking advantage of information and communications technologies	4	13 065.00	58/270	23	–	–	Closed
2006-2007	Supporting progress towards the internationally agreed development goals, through knowledge-management, networking and partnerships	5	13 065.00	60/247	24	–	–	Closed
		5A	3 415.90	60/246 and 61/252	6	–	–	Closed
		5B	5 071.00	62/235	10	–	–	Closed
2008-2009	Supporting progress towards achieving internationally agreed development goals, through innovation, networking and knowledge-management	6	16 480.90	62/237	27	–	–	Closed
		6A	2 170.40	62/236, 62/237 and 62/238	5	–	–	Closed
		6B	7 500.00	64/242 A	15	–	–	Closed
2010-2011	Support to addressing key global development challenges to further the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, through collaboration at the global, regional and national levels	7	18 651.30	64/244 A	28	–	–	Closed
		7A	4 000.00	Residual balances from tranches 1-4	12	–	–	Closed
		7B	5 000.00	64/243 and 64/244	11	–	–	Closed
2012-2013[a]	Supporting Member States to accelerate progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in the context of the multiple and interrelated development challenges	8	23 651.30	66/248 A	40	–	–	Closed
		8A	5 591.90	66/246	12	–	–	Closed
2014-2015	Supporting Member States in designing and implementing strategies and policies towards sustainable, equitable and inclusive development	9	28 398.80	68/248 A	46	46	2014-2017	60
		9A	7 113.00	Residual balances from tranches 5-6	13	13	2014-2017	56
2016-2017	Supporting Member States in implementing the post-2015 development agenda: strengthening statistics and data, evidence-based policies and accountability	10	28 398.80	70/249	33	33	2016-2019	13
		10A	5 657.40	Residual balances from tranche 7	10	10	2016-2019	3
Total approved			**209 655.30**		**358**	**102**		

Biennium	*Theme*	*Tranche*	*Approved (thousands of United dollars)*	*General Assembly resolution*	*Total number of projects*	*Number of active projects*	*Implementation period*	*Status as at 31 May 2017 (percentage)*
2018-2019	Supporting Member States in strengthening evidence-based policy coherence, integration and participatory implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels	11	28 398.80	Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 (A/72/6 (Sect. 35))	46	–	2018-2021	
Grand total			**238 054.10**[b]		**404**	**102**		

[a] Two projects originally envisioned for the eighth tranche were not implemented. The residual funds from the two projects will, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/237, be redeployed to forthcoming projects that can deliver better results.

[b] Excludes $4,000,000 representing the residual balance from tranches 1 to 4 that was programmed in the context of the seventh tranche, $7,113,000 representing the residual balance from tranches 5 and 6 that was programmed in the context of the ninth tranche, and $5,658,408 representing the residual balance from tranche 7 that was programmed in the context of the tenth tranche.

Annex II

Update on the status of the ninth and tenth tranches: implementation rates

Table A.1

Projects funded from section 35, Development Account, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (ninth tranche) as at 31 May 2017

	Project title	*Implementing entity*	*Approved (A)*	*Expenditures (B)*	*Implementation rate (percentage) [(B)/(A)]*
			(Thousands of United States dollars)		
A	Strengthening the capacity of national tax administrations in developing countries to effectively negotiate and apply double tax treaties for the financing of sustainable development	DESA	632.0	567.9	90
B	Supporting Member States in developing and strengthening environment statistics and integrated environmental-economic accounting for improved monitoring of sustainable development	DESA	691.0	411.7	60
C	Strengthening the capacity of small island developing States to assess progress in the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy to mitigate risks and reduce vulnerability	DESA	588.0	323.8	55
D	Supporting developing countries in their transition from Millennium Development Goals-based development strategies to broader sustainable development strategies through modelling-based policy analyses	DESA	630.0	429.1	68
E	Enhancing the capacity of Governments and indigenous leaders to ensure social integration and inclusive development in Africa and Asia	DESA	524.0	238.9	46
F	Strengthening the capacities of developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa to effectively produce and use population data in policymaking for sustainable development	DESA	588.0	264.6	45
G	Data collection methodology and tools for supporting the formulation of evidence-based policies in response to the challenge of population ageing in sub-Saharan Africa	DESA	395.8	295.0	75
H	Strengthening the capacities of developing countries to provide access to development information through open government data	DESA	592.0	530.1	90
I	Monitoring and reporting on sustainable development objectives, goals and targets: enhancing institutional capability in selected developing countries	DESA	639.0	280.1	44
J	Strengthening national capacities to develop national action plans to implement the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests	DESA	413.0	185.9	45
K	Building the capacity of policymakers in developing countries to address regulatory and institutional gaps in the field of sovereign debt governance	UNCTAD	588.0	266.9	45
L	Supporting Member States in developing and launching sustainable product export strategies through national sustainable product export reviews	UNCTAD	590.0	314.0	53
M	Building the capacities of selected least developed countries to upgrade and diversify their fish exports	UNCTAD	596.0	425.8	71

	Project title	Implementing entity	Approved (A) (Thousands of United States dollars)	Expenditures (B) (Thousands of United States dollars)	Implementation rate (percentage) [(B) (A)]
N	Strengthening the capacities of policymakers to assess the implications of non-tariff measures in international trade and formulate appropriate policy responses	UNCTAD	620.0	230.5	37
O	Climate change impacts on coastal transport infrastructure in the Caribbean: enhancing the adaptive capacity of small island developing States	UNCTAD	595.0	294.4	49
P	Strengthening the capacity of the States members of the Economic Community of Central African States to enhance domestic production linkages with the mineral resources sector	UNCTAD	641.0	395.8	62
Q	Building the capacities of developing countries to shift towards sustainable freight transport	UNCTAD	611.0	276.6	45
R	Strengthening the capacities of policymakers in developing countries and investment promotion officials in priority sectors to attract investment for sustainable and inclusive development	UNCTAD	585.0	201.9	35
S	Building sustainable and resilient ecological food systems using ecosystem-based adaptation in agriculture-dominated landscapes in sub-Saharan Africa	UNEP	633.0	569.5	90
T	Supporting developing countries in delivering sustainable consumption and production services at the country level	UNEP	651.0	493.8	76
U	Enabling sustainable and resilient development in post-crisis countries by mainstreaming environment and risk reduction into development planning	UNEP	521.0	427.2	82
V	Strengthening capacities to address land tenure security in Africa through better monitoring and information	UN-Habitat	501.0	495.7	99
W	Strengthening national capacities to formulate and adopt housing and slum upgrading strategies	UN-Habitat	629.0	595.4	95
X	Strengthening the capacities of Member States in the Asia-Pacific region to mainstream climate change concerns in national urban-related policies	UN-Habitat	730.0	547.5	75
Y	Strengthening the capacity of African countries to use mobile technologies to collect and disseminate data for effective policy and decision-making	ECA	1 165.0	406.5	35
Z	Strengthening capacity for policy analysis, forecasting and development planning in selected African countries	ECA	634.0	366.5	58
AA	Strengthening the capacity of African Governments to negotiate transparent, equitable and sustainable contracts in extractive industries for broad-based sustainable growth and socioeconomic development	ECA	635.0	459.0	72
AB	Strengthening the capacity of the African Peer Review Mechanism countries in conducting effective self-assessment and implementing national plans of action	ECA	624.0	356.0	57
AC	Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition	ECE	533.0	383.7	72
AD	Strengthening national capacity in the most vulnerable countries in the Economic Commission for Europe region for the sustainable development of statistics	ECE	535.0	234.6	44

	Project title	Implementing entity	Approved (A) (Thousands of United States dollars)	Expenditures (B) (Thousands of United States dollars)	Implementation rate (percentage) [(B)/(A)]
AE	Strengthening the capacity of transition and developing economies to participate in cross-border agricultural food supply chains	ECE	440.0	292.2	66
AF	Strengthening the capacity of Government and water operators to ensure equity of access to water and sanitation in countries in transition in the Economic Commission for Europe region, with a particular focus on small-scale water supplies and sanitation in rural areas	ECE	578.0	453.2	78
AG	Strengthening the technical capacity of public finance managers in select Caribbean small island developing States to manage their public finances	ECLAC	492.0	248.3	50
AH	Promoting inclusive finance through development banking innovation practices to support social, productive development and structural change in Latin American countries, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises	ECLAC	502.0	284.6	57
AI	Strengthening statistical capacities for building macroeconomic and sustainable development indicators in Latin American, Caribbean and Asia-Pacific countries	ECLAC	862.0	557.8	65
AJ	Logistics integration for more sustainable exploitation of natural resources in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	612.0	355.3	58
AK	Strengthening national capacities to design and implement rights-based policies and programmes that address care of dependent populations and women's economic empowerment in urban areas	ECLAC	564.0	336.0	60
AL	Enhancing the contribution of preferential trade agreements to inclusive and equitable trade	ESCAP	742.0	349.7	47
AM	Strengthening the capacity of Governments in the regions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to respond to the needs of youth in formulating inclusive and sustainable development policies	ESCAP	960.0	557.6	58
AN	Enhancing knowledge and capacity for the management of disaster risks for a resilient future in Asia and the Pacific	ESCAP	678.0	530.2	78
AO	Strengthened capacity of small island developing States in the Asia-Pacific region with regard to the valuation of environmental capital and the economic cost of gender inequality	ESCAP	638.0	310.6	49
AP	Strengthening the connectivity of countries in South and Central Asia, particularly landlocked and least developed countries, with a view to linking with subregional and regional transport and trade networks	ESCAP	632.0	244.1	39
AQ	Strengthening the statistical capacity of the countries members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in producing and disseminating short-term economic indicators for sustainable growth	ESCWA	518.0	360.7	70
AR	Strengthening national capacities for integrated, sustainable and inclusive population and development policies in the Arab region	ESCWA	714.0	127.3	18
AS	Promoting renewable energy investments for climate change mitigation and sustainable development	ESCWA	632.0	409.4	65

	Project title	Implementing entity	Approved (A)	Expenditures (B)	Implementation rate (percentage) [(B)/(A)]
			(Thousands of United States dollars)		
AT	Developing the capacity of countries members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to address the water and energy nexus for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals	ESCWA	525.0	213.5	41
	Total (ninth tranche)		**28 398.8**	**16 898.8**	**60**
AU	Enhancing national statistical capacity to measure, monitor, assess and report on progress on achieving post-2015 goals and targets for sustainable development	DESA	556.0	267.6	48
AV	Strengthening capacity of national tax administrations and ministries of finance in developing countries to protect and broaden their tax base for financing of sustainable development	DESA	360.0	313.1	87
AW	Supporting small island developing States in their efforts to build economic resistance	UNCTAD	488.0	158.5	32
AX	Support developing country policymakers in the formulation of national entrepreneurship policies through the implementation of entrepreneurship policy frameworks	UNCTAD	478.0	297.2	62
AY	Environmental peacebuilding for sustainable development in Africa	UNEP	558.0	381.1	68
AZ	Urban risk reduction and resilience building in lusophone Africa	UN-Habitat	559.0	493.4	88
BA	Strengthening and enhancing the capacity of law enforcement officials in combating travelling child sex offenders in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam	UNODC	557.0	339.7	61
BB	Strengthening Member State capacities in designing and implementing strategies and policies for sustainable cities in Africa	ECA	496.0	246.3	50
BC	Strengthening the national road safety management capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition as a means to achieve sustainable, equitable and inclusive development	ECE	498.0	274.7	55
BD	Strengthening the capacity of Central American and Caribbean countries in the preparation of sustainable energy policies and strategies.	ECLAC	500.0	168.2	34
BE	Financing strategies for inclusive and sustainable development for Asia and the Pacific	ESCAP	499.0	317.1	64
BF	Establishing national technology development and transfer systems in select ESCWA member States	ESCWA	497.0	272.8	55
BG	Promoting equality: Strengthening the capacity of select developing countries to design and implement equality-oriented public policies and programmes	5 Regional Commissions (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA)	1 067.0	479.2	45
	Total (ninth tranche-A)		**7 113.0**	**4 008.8**	**56**

Abbreviations: DESA, Department of Economic and Social Affairs; ESCAP, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; ESCWA, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; ECE, Economic Commission for Europe; ECLAC, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; ECA, Economic Commission for Africa; UNCTAD, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; UN-Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme; UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Table A.2

Projects funded from section 35, Development Account, of the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (tenth tranche) as at 31 May 2017

	Project title	*Implementing entity*	*Approved (A)*	*Expenditures (B)*	*Implementation rate (percentage) [(B)/(A)]*100*
			(Thousands of United States dollars)		
A	Programme for statistics and data	DESA, UNCTAD, ECA, ECE, ESCAP, ECLAC, ESCWA, UNEP, UN-Habitat and UNODC	10 000.0	1 358.1	14
B	Evidence based e-Government policies for advancing information technology infrastructure, governmental service delivery and accountability	DESA	530.0	22.0	4
C	Strategies for mitigating the impact of graduation from the least developed countries category	DESA	560.0	128.9	23
D	Strengthening capacities of selected developing countries to assess progress towards the implementation of the sustainable development agenda in the context of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development	DESA	395.0	–	–
E	Identification of domestic financial resources for sustainable development in Southern Africa	DESA	525.0	–	–
F	Monitoring progress towards sustainable forest management	DESA	509.0	24.0	5
G	Evidence-based policy action on youth development in Africa	DESA	390.0	–	–
H	Implementation of national sustainable development strategies in selected countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America	DESA	596.8	60.1	10
I	Trade and agricultural policies to support small-scale farmers and enhance food security	UNCTAD	646.0	132.2	20
J	Informal cross-border trade for empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration in the Great Lakes region	UNCTAD	547.0	72.8	13
K	Value addition of cotton products in Eastern and Southern Africa	UNCTAD	591.0	148.8	25
L	Development policies for sustainable economic growth in Southern Africa	UNCTAD	501.0	152.0	30
M	Indices for benchmarking productive capacities for evidence-based policymaking in landlocked developing countries	UNCTAD	599.0	11.7	2
N	Air quality data for health and environment policies in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region	UNEP	559.0	27.3	5
O	Enhancing capacities to manage information from corporate sustainability reporting in Latin American countries	UNEP	545.0	–	–
P	Sustainable, inclusive and evidence-based national urban policies in selected Arab States	UN-Habitat	451.0	70.6	16
Q	Accountability systems for measuring, monitoring and reporting on sustainable city policies in Latin America	UN-Habitat	453.0	11.9	3
R	Evidence-based policies for improved community safety in Latin American and African cities	UNODC	801.0	54.9	7

	Project title	Implementing entity	Approved (A) (Thousands of United States dollars)	Expenditures (B) (Thousands of United States dollars)	Implementation rate (percentage) [(B)/(A)]*100
S	Aligning the post-2015 agenda with planning frameworks in Africa	ECA	726.0	78.1	11
T	Accountability frameworks and evidence-based policies for development planning in Africa	ECA	625.0	–	–
U	Better monitoring of social protection in Africa	ECA	550.0	102.3	19
V	Accountability for sustainable forest management in Caucasus and Central Asian countries	ECE	501.0	101.6	20
W	Evidence-based policies and accountability mechanisms for sustainable urban development in the Economic Commission for Europe region	ECE	499.0	33.3	7
X	Sustainable energy for all in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia	ECE	564.0	81.2	14
Y	Big data for measuring the digital economy in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	682.0	112.4	16
Z	Addressing critical socio-environmental challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	615.0	358.1	58
AA	Input-output tables for industrial and trade policies in Central and South America	ECLAC	788.0	56.3	7
AB	South-South cooperation for science, technology and innovation policies in the Asia-Pacific region	ESCAP	750.0	–	–
AC	Innovative climate finance mechanisms for financial institutions in the Asia-Pacific region	ESCAP	670.0	149.7	22
AD	Evidence-based policies for the sustainable use of natural resources in the Asia-Pacific region	ESCAP	666.0	–	–
AE	Institutional development for better service delivery towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in West Asia	ESCWA	666.0	81.9	12
AF	Promoting social justice in selected countries in the Arab region	ESCWA	301.0	68.4	23
AG	Facilitating the implementation of the Arab Customs Union	ESCWA	597.0	117.2	20
	Total (tenth tranche)		**28 398.8**	**3 615.8**	**13**
AH	Building national capacities to design evidence-based sustainable development policies through the use of environmental, economy-wide, microsimulation and integrated assessments modelling tools	DESA	522.0	–	–
AI	Fostering the development of green exports through voluntary sustainability standards in Asia and Pacific	UNCTAD	520.0	25.0	5
AJ	Chemicals and waste in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Building capacity in Sustainable Development Goal follow-up and review in developing countries to minimize chemicals and waste risks across sectors	UNEP	501.0	–	–
AK	Sustainable Development Goal 11: Monitoring and reporting on human settlement indicators in Africa and Latin America	UN-Habitat	563.0	–	–
AL	Strengthen capacities to monitor illicit financial flows in the context of achieving target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals	UNODC	800.0	–	–

	Project title	*Implementing entity*	*Approved (A)*	*Expenditures (B)*	*Implementation rate (percentage) [(B)/(A)]*100*
			(Thousands of United States dollars)		
AM	Collecting and compiling natural capital accounts as a metric for sustainable development in Africa	ECA	602.8	–	–
AN	Strengthening national capacities of the ECE countries for evidence-based regulatory and procedural trade policies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals	ECE	500.0	82.5	17
AO	Demographic transition: opportunities and challenges to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	550.0	78.4	14
AP	Strengthening the capacities of policymakers for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: An Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goal help desk	ESCAP	500.0	–	–
AQ	Capacity-building for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab region	ESCWA	598.6	–	–
	Total (tenth tranche-A)		**5 657.4**	**185.9**	**3**

Abbreviations: DESA, Department of Economic and Social Affairs; ESCAP, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; ESCWA, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; ECE, Economic Commission for Europe; ECLAC, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; ECA, Economic Commission for Africa; UNCTAD, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; UN-Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme; UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

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Seventy-second session
Item 137 of the provisional agenda*
Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019

Implementation of projects financed from the Development Account: tenth progress report

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Annex II, table A.2
Replace table A.2 with the table below.

* A/72/150.

17-12991 (E) 280717

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Table A.2

Projects funded from section 35, Development Account, of the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (tenth tranche) as at 31 May 2017

	Project title	*Implementing entity*	*Approved (A)*	*Expenditures (B)*	*Implementation rate (percentage)*
			(Thousands of United States dollars)		*[(B)/(A)]*100*
A	Programme for statistics and data	DESA, UNCTAD, ECA, ECE, ESCAP, ECLAC, ESCWA, UNEP, UN-Habitat and UNODC	10 000.0	1 334.4	13
B	Evidence-based e-Government policies for advancing information technology infrastructure, governmental service delivery and accountability	DESA	530.0	22.0	4
C	Strategies for mitigating the impact of graduation from the least developed countries category	DESA	560.0	128.9	23
D	Strengthening capacities of selected developing countries to assess progress towards the implementation of the sustainable development agenda in the context of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development	DESA	395.0	–	–
E	Identification of domestic financial resources for sustainable development in Southern Africa	DESA	525.0	–	–
F	Monitoring progress towards sustainable forest management	DESA	509.0	24.0	5
G	Evidence-based policy action on youth development in Africa	DESA	390.0	–	–
H	Implementation of national sustainable development strategies in selected countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America	DESA	596.8	60.1	10
I	Trade and agricultural policies to support small-scale farmers, and enhance food security	UNCTAD	646.0	132.2	20
J	Informal cross-border trade for empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration in the Great Lakes region	UNCTAD	547.0	72.8	13
K	Value addition of cotton products in Eastern and Southern Africa	UNCTAD	591.0	148.8	25
L	Development policies for sustainable economic growth in Southern Africa	UNCTAD	501.0	152.0	30
M	Indices for benchmarking productive capacities for evidence-based policymaking in landlocked developing countries	UNCTAD	599.0	11.7	2
N	Air quality data for health and environment policies in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region	UNEP	559.0	27.3	5
O	Enhancing capacities to manage information from corporate sustainability reporting in Latin American countries	UNEP	545.0	–	–
P	Sustainable, inclusive and evidence-based national urban policies in selected Arab States	UN-Habitat	451.0	70.6	16
Q	Accountability systems for measuring, monitoring and reporting on sustainable city policies in Latin America	UN-Habitat	453.0	11.9	3

	Project title	Implementing entity	Approved (A)	Expenditures (B)	Implementation rate (percentage)
			(Thousands of United States dollars)		[(B)/(A)]*100
R	Evidence-based policies for improved community safety in Latin American and African cities	UNODC	801.0	54.9	7
S	Aligning the post-2015 agenda with planning frameworks in Africa	ECA	726.0	78.1	11
T	Accountability frameworks and evidence-based policies for development planning in Africa	ECA	625.0	32.3	5
U	Better monitoring of social protection in Africa	ECA	550.0	102.3	19
V	Accountability for sustainable forest management in Caucasus and Central Asian countries	ECE	501.0	101.6	20
W	Evidence-based policies and accountability mechanisms for sustainable urban development in Economic Commission for Europe region	ECE	499.0	33.3	7
X	Sustainable energy for all in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia	ECE	564.0	81.2	14
Y	Big data for measuring the digital economy in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	682.0	112.4	16
Z	Addressing critical socio-environmental challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	615.0	358.1	58
AA	Input-output tables for industrial and trade policies in Central and South America	ECLAC	788.0	56.3	7
AB	South-South cooperation for science, technology and innovation policies in the Asia-Pacific region	ESCAP	750.0	–	–
AC	Innovative climate finance mechanisms for financial institutions in the Asia-Pacific region	ESCAP	670.0	149.7	22
AD	Evidence-based policies for the sustainable use of natural resources in the Asia-Pacific region	ESCAP	666.0	–	–
AE	Institutional Development for better service delivery towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals in West Asia	ESCWA	666.0	81.9	12
AF	Promoting social justice in selected countries in the Arab region	ESCWA	301.0	68.4	23
AG	Facilitating the implementation of the Arab Customs Union	ESCWA	597.0	117.2	20
	Total (tenth tranche)		**28 398.8**	**3 624.4**	**13**
AH	Building national capacities to design evidence-based sustainable development policies by the use of environmental, economy-wide, microsimulation, and integrated assessments modelling tools	DESA	522.0	–	–
AI	Fostering the development of "green" exports through Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) in Asia and Pacific	UNCTAD	520.0	25.0	5
AJ	Chemicals and Waste in the 2030 Agenda — Building capacity in SDG follow-up and review in developing countries to minimize chemicals and waste risks across sectors	UNEP	501.0	–	–
AK	SDG11: Monitoring and reporting on human settlement indicators in Africa and Latin America	UN-Habitat	563.0	–	–
AL	Strengthen capacities to monitor illicit financial flows in the context of achieving SDG Target 16.4	UNODC	800.0	–	–

	Project title	*Implementing entity*	*Approved (A)*	*Expenditures (B)*	*Implementation rate (percentage)*
			(Thousands of United States dollars)		*[(B)/(A)]*100*
AM	Collecting and compiling natural capital accounts as a metrics for sustainable development in Africa	ECA	602.8	–	–
AN	Strengthening national capacities of the UNECE countries for evidence-based regulatory and procedural trade policies to achieve SDGs	ECE	500.0	82.5	17
AO	Demographic transition: opportunities and challenges to achieve the SDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	550.0	78.4	14
AP	Strengthening the capacities of policy makers for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — An Asia-Pacific SDG Help desk	ESCAP	500.0	–	–
AQ	Capacity Building for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region	ESCWA	598.6	–	–
	Total (tenth tranche-A)		**5 657.4**	**185.9**	**3**

Abbreviations: ESCAP, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; ESCWA, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; ECE, Economic Commission for Europe; ECLAC, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; ECA, Economic Commission for Africa; UNCTAD, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; UN-Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

United Nations A/72/93

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Seventy-second session
Item 29 of the preliminary list*
Advancement of women

Status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/131 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its seventy-second session a report on the status of the Convention. It covers the period from 2 July 2015 to 1 July 2017.

* A/72/50.

17-09958 (E) 200617

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I. Status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

1. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/180. It was opened for signature, subject to ratification, and for accession at United Nations Headquarters on 1 March 1980 and, in accordance with article 27 of the Convention, entered into force on 3 September 1981.

2. As at 1 July 2017, 189 States had ratified, acceded to or succeeded to the Convention, which represents no change since the submission of the previous report (A/70/124). The list of States parties to the Convention and the dates of deposit of their instruments of ratification, accession or succession to the Convention are available from the website of the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs (http://treaties.un.org), along with all declarations, reservations, objections and other relevant information.

3. As at 1 July 2017, 71 States parties had deposited with the Secretary-General instruments of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, which relates to the meeting time of the Committee. The State parties having accepted the amendment since the submission of the previous report are Sri Lanka and Belgium. The list of States that have accepted the amendment to article 20 of the Convention and the dates of deposit of their instruments of acceptance are available on the website of the Treaty Section.

4. During the reporting period, no objections to reservations were received; and Bahrain modified its reservations to articles 2, 15 (4) and 16 (C.N.578.2016); the Democratic People's Republic of Korea withdrew its reservations to articles 2 (f) and 9 (2) (C.N.631.2015); Singapore partially withdrew its reservation to article 11 (C.N.543.2015); and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland extended the territorial application of the Convention to Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha (C.N.128.2017), to Anguilla and the Cayman Islands (C.N.97.2016) and to Bermuda (C.N.127.2017) and made additional reservations to article 15 (4) on behalf of the territories of the Cayman Islands (C.N.97.2016) and Bermuda (C.N.127.2017). The above depositary notifications are available from the website of the Office of Legal Affairs for reference.

II. Status of the Optional Protocol to the Convention

5. By its resolution 54/4, the General Assembly adopted the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Optional Protocol was opened for signature, subject to ratification and accession, at United Nations Headquarters on 10 December 1999 and, in accordance with article 16, paragraph 1, of the Optional Protocol, entered into force on 22 December 2000.

6. As at 1 July 2017, 109 States parties had ratified, acceded to or succeeded to the Optional Protocol. This represents an increase of three States parties since the submission of the previous report. The three States parties were: Monaco, on 3 May 2016; the Central African Republic, on 11 October 2016; and Sao Tome and Principe, on 23 March 2017. The list of States parties to the Optional Protocol, the dates of deposit of their instruments of ratification, accession or succession, and all declarations, reservations and other relevant information are also available from the website of the Treaty Section.

III. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

A. Substantive and technical servicing

7. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has responsibility for supporting the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The Committee is serviced by the secretariat of the Committee, which comprises the Secretary (P-4), four Human Rights Officers (P-3), one Junior Professional Officer (JPO) and one Assistant (General Service).

8. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has ensured that the strong links between the Committee and the intergovernmental machinery responsible for the promotion of gender equality continue to be maintained. The previous and current Chairs of the Committee participated in the sixtieth and sixty-first sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in 2016 and 2017. The then Chair also addressed the Third Committee of the General Assembly at its seventieth and seventy-first sessions. The Committee's interaction with the United Nations human rights machinery is extremely important for its overall activities, and the Committee benefits greatly from the cooperation of the relevant stakeholders to effectively discharge its mandate.

9. The Committee regularly discusses issues of common concern with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). On 12 and 19 November 2015, the Committee was briefed by videoconference by the Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of the Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships Bureau of UN-Women, Lakshmi Puri, and on 14 and 15 June 2016, a Committee member participated in an expert meeting organized by UN-Women on monitoring indicator 5.1.1 of the global Sustainable Development Goals indicators (see E/CN.3/2017/2, annex III) relating to legal frameworks to end discrimination against women. The Committee continues to collaborate with UN-Women on the follow-up to and review of target 5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals and has started to include systematic references to Sustainable Development Goals and targets in its lists of issues and questions, constructive dialogues with States parties and concluding observations. UN-Women is providing support to the Committee in reviewing its reporting guidelines in the light of the Sustainable Development Goals.

10. The Committee has met with the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights and other senior staff, and has welcomed opportunities for discussion with relevant divisions, branches and sections on issues relevant to the work of the Committee.

11. The Committee meets regularly with special procedures mandate holders, including, during the reporting period, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences and the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice, as well as with the Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

12. On 17 November 2016, the Committee held an informal meeting with the States parties to the Convention, which was attended by 71 States parties. The Committee briefed the States parties on the implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocol in the context of General Assembly resolution 68/268 on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system, its engagement with UN-Women on indicator 5.1.1 of the global

Sustainable Development Goals indicators and its recent work on draft general recommendations.

13. The Committee continued to contribute actively to the work of the human rights treaty bodies, especially within the framework of the annual meetings of Chairs of treaty bodies. The Chair participated in the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth meetings of the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies, which were convened from 30 May to 3 June 2016 and from 26 to 30 June 2017 in New York. During the twenty-eighth meeting, the Chair of the Committee participated in discussions on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/268, in particular regarding the role of the Chairs in taking decisions on procedural matters and working methods, the need for the treaty bodies and OHCHR to have the material and human resources necessary for the treaty bodies to perform their work, the implementation of the guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies and of the guidelines against intimidation or reprisals and the engagement of treaty bodies with national human rights institutions. The Chair also participated in informal consultations with States parties regarding General Assembly resolution 68/268, as well as informal consultations with the Inter-American human rights mechanisms, United Nations entities and specialized agencies, civil society organizations and the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. During the twenty-ninth meeting of the Chairs, the Chair of the Committee participated in discussions on similar and additional items, such as: the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the human rights treaty body system (A/71/118) submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/268; the development of a common approach to engaging with national human rights institutions; strategies to enhance the visibility of the treaty body system; and treaty bodies and the Sustainable Development Goals. She also participated in consultations with States parties, United Nations entities and specialized agencies, national human rights institutions and civil society organizations.

14. Committee members participated in panel discussions organized by various stakeholders.

15. During the reporting period, the Committee held a general discussion on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction and climate change. The discussion was organized by OHCHR on 29 February 2016, with support from the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Geneva office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, as part of the first phase in the development of a general recommendation on the topic. It was attended by a number of States parties, United Nations entities and specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations and included as speakers the current and the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction; the Assistant Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization; an academic expert on earthquake disasters and gender from Japan; a public policy expert on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation from Trinidad and Tobago; and a representative of CARE Bangladesh.

16. On 19 November 2015, the Committee convened a panel discussion on the topic "Connecting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the women and peace and security agenda", organized by OHCHR in collaboration with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and the treaty body platform of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security and to underline the importance of the Committee's general recommendation No. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and

post-conflict situations in that context. The panellists included the then Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, a member of the Syrian Women's League, the Vice-Director of the Directorate of International Law of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights. A large number of States parties, United Nations entities and specialized agencies, international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations attended the event.

17. With a view to further enhancing and harmonizing its working methods with other treaty bodies, and in line with General Assembly resolution 68/268, the Committee took note of the guidelines against intimidation or reprisals ("San José guidelines"; HRI/MC/2015/6) endorsed by the twenty-seventh meeting of Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies, held in San José, from 22 to 26 June 2015, and decided that, pending further consideration, its Bureau would continue to act as focal point for intimidation or reprisals. The Committee adopted the elements for the elaboration of and consultations on general comments endorsed by the twenty-seventh meeting of Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies (see A/70/302, para. 91 (a) to (h)) with minor reservations. It decided to introduce a new standard paragraph on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, revise several standard paragraphs and subheadings and use uniform language for concerns and recommendations in its concluding observations on State party reports; further strengthen the role of country rapporteurs, continue to operate in country task forces and enhance the structure of its constructive dialogues with States parties; and revise its treaty-specific reporting guidelines in the light of the Sustainable Development Goals. It reviewed two States parties under the new simplified reporting procedure during the reporting period, but decided to suspend the application of that procedure[1] pending an assessment of its effectiveness. It decided to hold its biennial informal meetings with the States parties to the Convention as public meetings with live webcasting.

B. Evaluation by the Committee

18. As at 1 July 2017, there are 11 States parties with long-overdue reports (more than five years overdue). Two of the States parties that have not yet submitted their long-overdue reports, Antigua and Barbuda and Saint Kitts and Nevis, have been listed to be considered by the Committee in the absence of their reports. The Committee also continues to send reminders to States parties with overdue reports. In the light of the additional meeting time allocated to the Committee under General Assembly resolution 68/268, it now schedules the reports of 28 States parties for review per year and has scheduled 36 States parties to be considered at its sixty-seventh session (July 2017), sixty-eighth session (October and November 2017), sixty-ninth session (February and March 2018) and seventieth session (July 2018). Six reports have not yet been formally scheduled. The Committee notes that it has been able to slightly reduce its backlog and considers that the consideration of combined reports assists greatly in keeping the backlog in check. Most reports submitted consist of combined reports.

19. The Committee is gratified that it continues to attract a wide following within the United Nations system and civil society, including national human rights

[1] The prior decision of the Committee to consider the following States parties under the simplified reporting procedure remains unimpaired: Romania (combined seventh to ninth periodic reports), Israel (sixth periodic report), Luxembourg (combined sixth and seventh periodic reports), Liechtenstein (fifth periodic report), Mauritius (eighth periodic report) and Bulgaria (eighth periodic report).

institutions and non-governmental organizations, and that it has been able to interact with the wider human rights framework, including the special procedures mandate holders and other treaty bodies. Its transfer to OHCHR and the holding of its sessions in Geneva have enabled the Committee to develop close relationships with Geneva-based United Nations entities and specialized agencies, as well as with other bodies, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

20. The Committee considers that it has continued to make efforts to harmonize its practices with those of other treaty bodies. It also considers that its follow-up procedure, which is similar to that of other treaty bodies, has strengthened implementation at the national level.

Fulfilment by States parties of reporting obligations

21. Article 18, paragraph 1, of the Convention provides that States parties undertake to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention within one year after its entry into force for the State concerned and thereafter at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.

22. Between 2 July 2015 and 1 July 2017, the Secretary-General received reports (many of which are combined reports) from the following States parties: Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Barbados, Burkina Faso, Chile, the Congo, the Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Paraguay, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Suriname, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and the State of Palestine.

23. During the reporting period, the Committee held the following six sessions: sixty-first session, from 6 to 24 July 2015; sixty-second session, from 26 October to 20 November 2015; sixty-third session, from 15 February to 4 March 2016; sixty-fourth session, from 4 to 22 July 2016; sixty-fifth session, from 24 October to 18 November 2016; and sixty-sixth session, from 13 February to 3 March 2017. During those sessions, the Committee considered the reports of 54 States parties. The sixty-seventh session will be held from 3 to 21 July 2017, at which an additional eight reports will be considered by the Committee.

Reports awaiting consideration, overdue reports and requests for follow-up reports

24. A total of 42 reports submitted by States parties have yet to be considered by the Committee, 36 of which have been scheduled to be considered at sessions of the Committee to be held between July 2017 and July 2018 (see para. 18). Six reports received have not yet been formally scheduled.

25. In the light of the reduced backlog of reports awaiting consideration, the Committee initiated a systematic effort to encourage States parties to submit long-overdue reports. On the basis of its decisions 29/I and 31/III (i), it established that it would proceed with consideration of the implementation of the Convention in the absence of a report only as a last resort and in the presence of a delegation. The Committee continued its practice of inviting States parties with long-overdue reports to submit all their overdue reports as a combined report.

26. Currently, the following States parties have not yet submitted their initial reports: Dominica, Kiribati, San Marino and Sao Tome and Principe.

27. Reports that were due in June 2012 or before include those from: Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Kiribati, Latvia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino and Sao Tome and Principe.

28. Reports that were due between July 2012 and June 2017 include those from: Algeria, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chad, the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Indonesia, Jamaica, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malta, Morocco, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

C. Working methods of the Committee

29. Taking into account the word limits for treaty body documentation established in General Assembly resolution 68/268, the Committee's report to the Assembly no longer includes the concluding observations on the reports of States parties, the decisions on communications and general recommendations of the Committee or the reports of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol to the Convention; those are published as separate documents and are posted on the website of OHCHR.

30. The Committee has continued to convene its pre-session working group two sessions in advance of the consideration of a report to ensure that States parties have enough time to respond to their respective lists of issues and questions.

31. The Committee, in the last paragraph of its concluding observations, establishes the due date for the State party's next periodic report. In cases where the next periodic report is overdue or becomes due within one or two years of the date of consideration, the Committee requests the State party to submit its next report as a combined periodic report. Most reports considered by the Committee are now combined reports.

32. During the reporting period, the Committee focused on ensuring that the concluding observations on the reports of States parties were more concise, targeted, country-specific and precise, so that they could be implemented more effectively at the national level. It should be recalled that, at its forty-first session, the Committee decided to adopt the practice of inserting titles (subject headings) in its concluding observations, and agreed on a list of titles which would be applied flexibly and as appropriate for the State party concerned (A/63/38, part two, annex X). At its sixty-second and sixty-third sessions, the Committee decided to shorten several standard paragraphs contained in its concluding observations.

33. At its forty-first session, the Committee decided to introduce a follow-up procedure whereby it would include a request to individual States parties in the concluding observations for information on steps taken to implement specific recommendations. At its forty-fourth session, the Committee decided to appoint a rapporteur on follow-up to concluding observations and an alternate. It is noted that a maximum of two recommendations are identified for follow-up. The criteria for the selection of follow-up recommendations are that the concerns addressed in those recommendations constitute a major obstacle to the enjoyment by women of their rights and thus to the implementation of the Convention as a whole and that their implementation would be feasible within the suggested time frame. The follow-up report is also made public and is available on the website of OHCHR. The follow-up rapporteur collaborates with the country rapporteur on the assessment of the follow-up report. The rapporteur reports to the Committee at each session, and that report is included in the Committee's report to the General Assembly. At its forty-seventh session, the Committee decided to include follow-up to concluding observations as

a standing item on the agenda. At its fifty-fourth session, the Committee updated its methodology on the follow-up procedure to concluding observations and adopted an information note on the follow-up procedure for different stakeholders (see A/67/38, part three, annex III and appendix). At its sixty-second session, the Committee decided that the length of written information from States parties on follow-up to concluding observations must not exceed 4,000 words (see A/71/38, part two, decision 62/V). At its sixty-fifth session, it decided that the use of the follow-up procedure should be continued and that another assessment should be made at the seventy-first session of the Committee, to be held in October and November 2018 (see A/72/38, part two, para. 20). The Committee also appointed a new rapporteur on follow-up as well as an alternate, each for a two-year term.

34. The Committee continued its interaction with the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system that contribute to its work and support the full implementation of the Convention at the national level. It continued to receive joint information submitted by United Nations country teams regarding States parties under consideration by the Committee, and encouraged the entities of the United Nations system to undertake follow-up activities on the basis of the Committee's concluding observations at the country level.

35. The Committee continued its practice of meeting informally with non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions wishing to present country-specific information on States parties whose reports were before it, at the beginning of the first, second and, in the case of four-week sessions, third weeks of the session. The Committee's pre-session working group also provided opportunities for non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions to present written and oral information. General and session-specific information notes for non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions are regularly posted on the website of OHCHR.

36. The Committee continued to emphasize the important role of parliamentarians in the implementation of the Convention and the follow-up to concluding observations and includes a standard paragraph on the role of parliaments in each observation. The Inter-Parliamentary Union regularly submits information on the representation of women in the parliaments of the States parties under consideration and organizes regular capacity-building sessions for parliamentarians on the Convention and the Optional Protocol.

37. The Committee continued its practice of adopting statements on particular events or developments. Those include statements on the refugee crises and the protection of women and girls, adopted at its sixty-second session, and on the rights of rural women, adopted at its sixty-third session; a joint statement by human rights experts on International Women's Day, adopted shortly after its sixty-third session; and a joint statement by the Committee, the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, UN-Women and OHCHR entitled "Addressing gender dimensions in large-scale movements of refugees and migrants", adopted between its sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth sessions (all available from the website of OHCHR). The Committee also made written submissions to the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2016 and 2017 on the links between the Convention and the Sustainable Development Goals (also available from the website of OHCHR).

38. The Committee adopted general recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women at its sixty-third session (CEDAW/C/GC/34). The general recommendation on gender-based violence against women updating general recommendation No. 19 (1992) on violence against women is in the process of being finalized. With respect to the general recommendation on the right of women

and girls to education, a final draft has been prepared. In relation to the general recommendation on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in a changing climate, a first draft has been prepared and posted online for comments by external stakeholders.

D. Working methods with regard to the Optional Protocol

39. During the reporting period, the Committee continued to carry out its activities under the Optional Protocol to the Convention. The Committee normally allocates two meetings per session to matters relating to the Optional Protocol for consideration in plenary meeting.

40. The Committee's Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol held six sessions during the reporting period. The Working Group convenes three times a year for a total of 10 working days. To date, the Working Group has registered 118 communications, 25 of which were registered during the reporting period. Of the 118 communications, 45 remain open.

41. During the reporting period, the Committee adopted final decisions with regard to 20 communications. At its sixty-first session, held in July 2015, the Committee adopted views finding violations in relation to communications Nos. 24/2009 and 45/2012 and declared communications Nos. 50/2013 and 52/2013 inadmissible. At its sixty-second session, held in October and November 2015, the Committee adopted views finding a violation in relation to communication No. 53/2013 and declared communications Nos. 55/2013 and 56/2013 inadmissible. At its sixty-third session, held in February and March 2016, the Committee adopted views finding violations in relation to communications Nos. 46/2012 and 60/2013 and declared communication No. 62/2013 inadmissible. At its sixty-fourth session, held in July 2016, the Committee declared communications Nos. 57/2013, 64/2013 and 67/2014 inadmissible. At its sixty-fifth session, held in October and November 2016, the Committee adopted views finding a violation in relation to communication No. 66/2014 and declared communications Nos. 61/2013, 71/2014 and 74/2014 inadmissible. At its sixty-sixth session, held in February and March 2017, the Committee adopted views finding a violation in relation to communication No. 58/2013 and declared communications Nos. 54/2013 and 69/2014 inadmissible.

42. During the reporting period, the Committee and its Working Group on Communications continued to examine information, under its procedure on follow-up to views, in relation to 15 views concerning 13 States parties: Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Peru, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain and the United Republic of Tanzania. During the same period, the Committee decided to close the follow-up dialogue with a finding of partially satisfactory resolution in relation to its views on communication No. 28/2010 concerning Turkey and with a finding of satisfactory resolution in relation to its views on communications Nos. 20/2008, 31/2011 and 32/2011 concerning Bulgaria and No. 53/2013 concerning Denmark.

43. The Committee's newly established Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol held six sessions during the reporting period. The Working Group convenes three times a year for a total of six working days. During the reporting period, two submissions under article 8 of the Optional Protocol requesting inquiries were received by the Committee and registered by the secretariat pursuant to the rules of procedure of the Committee. There are currently four inquiries pending with the Committee, as well as six submissions under article 8 of the Optional Protocol in relation to which no decision has yet been taken by the Committee on whether to conduct an inquiry. The members designated by the Committee to conduct inquiries

Nos. 2011/2 and 2014/1 undertook visits to the territory of the States parties concerned during the reporting period.

IV. Efforts to encourage universal ratification of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, and acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention

44. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of UN-Women continue to encourage universal ratification of the Convention and the Optional Protocol and promote acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, which stipulates the meeting time allocated to the Committee. They have encouraged related action in their meetings with delegations, in statements and presentations at United Nations Headquarters, at other duty stations, and at conferences and other forums.

V. Technical assistance provided to States parties

45. Technical assistance and capacity-building activities of OHCHR routinely focus on the Convention, including with respect to the preparation of reports and follow-up to concluding observations, as well as the mechanisms established under the Optional Protocol. During the reporting period, OHCHR significantly increased its capacity-building for treaty reporting, thanks to additional resources from the United Nations regular budget allocated under General Assembly resolution 68/268. A number of States benefited from training workshops related to preparing their reports on the implementation of the Convention or to preparing for the constructive dialogue with the Committee. UN-Women also continued to organize training seminars on the Convention in a number of countries, which benefited from the contributions of experts of the Committee and involved not only Government officials but also other stakeholders such as non-governmental organizations. Capacity-building is considered to be vital to assist States parties in the implementation of their treaty obligations.

VI. Dissemination of the Convention, its Optional Protocol and information on the work of the Committee

46. OHCHR has redesigned and improved the page on the Convention and its Optional Protocol and the work of the Committee on its website (http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cedaw/pages/cedawindex.aspx). The text of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, reports of States parties, lists of issues and questions, including lists of issues prior to reporting, responses from States parties, States parties' introductory statements and the composition of delegations presenting reports, the Committee's concluding observations and documents and any other information concerning the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the working methods of the Committee and the meetings of States parties are posted on the website. The Universal Human Rights Index, the electronic research tool maintained by OHCHR that indexes concluding observations of human rights treaty bodies and recommendations of special procedures mandate holders, includes all lists of issues and concluding observations of the Committee.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

47. The Committee has made significant efforts to reduce the delay between the submission of reports and their consideration, using more efficient working methods, including time management. Its efforts to encourage States parties to comply with their reporting obligations, especially where reports are long overdue, have been successful. It has enhanced its interaction with stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention, including through the increased use of videoconference technology, and has contributed to the common efforts of all treaty bodies to harmonize and strengthen the human rights treaty body system, in line with General Assembly resolution 68/268. The Committee has continued to develop its jurisprudence through its work under the Optional Protocol, including under the inquiry procedure, and its follow-up procedure in relation to views on individual communications finding violations has yielded positive, albeit modest, results. It has adopted one general recommendation, and three draft general recommendations are currently being prepared; one of them is nearing completion. The Committee organized one day of general discussion during the reporting period. The Committee has made its concluding observations more focused, country-specific and user-friendly. Follow-up to concluding observations has been mostly successful, although additional resources are required both for the Committee and the States concerned. Despite the Committee's achievements, further efforts are needed to encourage the implementation of the Convention at the national level.